

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Favorable reconsideration of this application in light of the previous amendments and following discussion is respectfully requested.

Claims 1, 3-10, 12-19, and 21-31 are pending. By this Amendment Claims 2, 11 and 20 are canceled; Claims 1, 5, 10, 14, 19, 29 and 30 are amended; and new Claim 31 is added. No new matter is added by any of the amendments.

Applicants appreciate the Office Action's indication that Claims 2-7, 11-16 and 20-25 contain allowable subject matter. Claims 1, 10, 19, 29 and 30 have been amended to incorporate allowable subject matter.

Applicants respectfully request that reference number JP 09-110191, of the Information Disclosure Statement filed August 9, 2004 be considered. Copies of the Form PTO-1449 is attached hereto for the Examiner's convenience.

The Office Action rejects Claims 1, 8-10, 17-19 and 26-29 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) over U.S.P. 6,985,265 to Ito and Claim 30 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) to Ito. These rejections are moot in view of the amendments.

With respect to new independent Claim 31, it is believed that a brief review of the subject matter of independent Claim 31 would be helpful. In this regard, independent Claim 31 is directed to a sheet cassette including a tray main body part. A tray expansion/contraction part is supported by the tray main body part and configured to slide relative to the tray main body part to a cassette expanded position and a cassette contracted position. The tray expansion/contraction part includes a rear end regulation member configured to be moved in a direction in which recording media stacked in the sheet cassette are fed to regulate rear ends of the recording media. A sliding guide part including an elongated slit and a plurality of rail members is configured to support the rear end regulation member to freely slide and to form a moving path of the rear end regulation member.

None of the applied references disclose a sliding guide part including an elongated slit and a plurality of rail members as in new Claim 31. Instead Ito merely discloses a single slit. See Fig. 3.

The dependent claims are allowable for at least the reasons discussed above as well as for the individual features they recite.

For the foregoing reasons, it is respectfully submitted that this application is now in condition for allowance. A Notice of Allowance is earnestly solicited.

Should the Examiner deem that any further action is necessary to place this application in even better form for allowance, the Examiner is encouraged to contact the Applicants' undersigned representative at the telephone number listed below.

Respectfully submitted,

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SHEET 1 OF 1

Form PTO 1449 (Modified)		U.S. DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE		ATTY DOCKET NO. 249593US3	SERIAL NO. 10/812,953	
LIST OF REFERENCES CITED BY APPLICANT AUG 29 2004		APPLICANT		Toshiaki TAKAHASHI, et al.		
		FILING DATE		GROUP 3653		
March 31, 2004						
U.S. PATENT DOCUMENTS						
EXAMINER INITIAL	DOCUMENT NUMBER	DATE	NAME		CLASS	SUB CLASS
KJ	AA 5,176,374	01/05/1993	M. YAMADA			
KJ	AB 6,308,027	10/23/2001	M. OBU, et al.			
KJ	AC 6,674,982	01/06/2004	M. SAITO, et al.			
KJ	AD 6,725,003	04/20/2004	Y. SHINKAI, et al.			
KJ	AE 6,595,514	07/22/2003	T. TAKAHASHI			
KJ	AF 6,542,707	04/01/2003	S. MURAMATSU, et al.			
KJ	AG 6,597,883	07/22/2003	S. MURAMATSU, et al.			
KJ	AH 6,757,515	06/29/2004	K. UEDA			
KJ	AI 6,697,584	02/24/2004	K. TSUNODA, et al.			
AJ						
AK						
AL						
AM						
AN						
FOREIGN PATENT DOCUMENTS						
	DOCUMENT NUMBER	DATE	COUNTRY		TRANSLATION YES NO	
AO	9-110191	04/28/1997	JAPAN (with English Abstract)		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
AP					<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
AQ					<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
AR					<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
AS					<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
AT					<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
AU					<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
AV					<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
OTHER REFERENCES (Including Author, Title, Date, Pertinent Pages, etc.)						
	AW					
	AX					
	AY					
	AZ	<input type="checkbox"/> Additional References sheet(s) attached				
Examiner /Kaitlin Joerger/					Date Considered 05/18/2006	
<small>*Examiner: Initial if reference is considered, whether or not citation is in conformance with MPEP 609; Draw line through citation if not in conformance and not considered. Include copy of this form with next communication to applicant.</small>						